@Since the State of Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Uttaranchal were constituted in 2000-01, the agriculture land/cultivable land of Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Uttaranchal was included in Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh respectively during the period of 1998-99 and 1999-2000.

Genetic qualities of golden rice

1828. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Indian Council of Agricultural Research has signed a work plan with International Rice Research Institute, Phillipines to enhance genetic qualities of 'golden rice':

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the genetically modified golden rice would curb blindness among children; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b) Indian Council of Agricultural Research and International Rice Research Institute, Philippines have signed a workplan for the period 2005-08 which includes a project on 'golden rice' entitled "The Development of Adapted Germplasm for India with High Levels and Provitamin Carotenoids" with an objective to transfer the Provitamin-A trait/events from 'golden rice' lines to popular Indian rice varieties.

(c) and (d) 'Golden Rice' is a variety of rice engineered to produce beta carotene (pro-vitamin A) to help to combat vitamin A deficiency which is one of the causes of blindness.

Compensation to farmers under NAIS

†1829. SHRI UDAY PRATAP SINGH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the target of the National Agriculture Insurance Scheme for the year 2004-05 and the current Year to compensate losses of farmers due to natural calamity, drought or heavy rainfall;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.